

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-03 AID-20 DRC-01 SNM-02 SS-15 A-01

NSC-10 PRS-01 RSC-01 /069 W
----- 060291

P R 111157Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6463

INFO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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REF: A. STATE 179007; B. BANGKOK 13117; C. BANGKOK 12877;
D. BANGKOK 12596; E. BANGKOK 12512 (EXDIS) F. BANGKOK 14035

1. SUMMARY: THE TEXT OF THE STATEMENT CODEL WOLFF
ISSUED (REF A) IS A REHASH OF THE SAME GENERALITIES THE
COMMITTEE WROTE BEFORE IT CAME OUT HERE. THE POINTS
IN THE STATEMENT THAT NEED CLARIFICATION ARE: THE
EFFECT OF CRACKING DOWN ON THAI OPIUM GROWERS, CHARGES
OF OFFICIAL COMPLICITY, THAI SUCCESSES IN NARCOTICS
SUPPRESSION, THE EFFECT OF AN AID CUT OFF, AND THE
U.N. CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM. END SUMMARY.

2. THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO RESPOND TO PRESS QUES-
TIONS ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

A. CRACKING DOWN ON OPIUM GROWERS: MISSION
REPRESENTATIVES EMPHATICALLY TOLD THE CODEL THAT CRACKING
DOWN ON HILLTRIBES OPIUM GROWERS IN THAILAND WITHOUT
FIRST PROVIDING SUBSTITUTE INCOMES WOULD CAUSE SERIOUS
SOCIAL/ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS FOR THE HILLTRIBES AND WOULD
EXACERBATE THAILAND'S INSURGENCY PROBLEM IN THE NORTH.
THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO POINT OUT THAT MOST OF THE
OPIUM GROWN IN THAILAND DOES NOT ENTER INTERNATIONAL
TRAFFIC. A CRACKDOWN ON OPIUM GROWING HILLTRIBES

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THEREFORE, WOULD DO LITTLE TO DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF

NARCOTICS ENTERING THE U.S. THE RESULTING UNREST, HOWEVER, COULD DIVERT RTG POLICE AWAY FROM STOPPING TRAFFICKING OF OPIUM FROM BURMA THROUGH THAILAND TO INTERNATIONAL MARKETS, WHICH IS THE PRESENT NARCOTICS THREAT.

B. COMPLICITY AND THAI SUCCESSES: CODEL WOLFF REPEATS OLD CHARGES THAT SOUTHEAST ASIAN OFFICIALS ARE "RUMORED" TO BE INVOLVED IN TRAFFICKING. THE FACT IS THAT THE RTG HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS AGAINST DRUG TRAFFICKERS, AND WOLFF ACKNOWLEDGED THIS IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH PRAPHAT (REFS C AND E). WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT HIGH-LEVEL RTG OFFICIALS ARE INVOLVED IN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING, BUT LOW-LEVEL OFFICIALS HAVE OCCASIONALLY SUCCUMBED TO SUCH TEMPTATIONS. FURTHERMORE, AN INDICATION THAT THE RTG IS SERIOUSLY PURSUING ITS NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION RESPONSIBILITIES IS THAT SOME GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED, TRIED, AND IMPRISONED. THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO POINT OUT THAT ON AUGUST 1, 1973 BRITISH ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES IN HONG KONG SAID THAT NO OPIUM HAD COME INTO HONG KONG FOR THE PAST SEVEN WEEKS. THIS SUCCESS IS DUE TO CONCERTED RTG ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE ARREST OF LU PENG KIA AND TWO OTHER MAJOR SMUGGLING FIGURES IN BANGKOK JULY 10 LED ELVEN DAYS LATER TO THE THAI MARINE POLICE SEIZURE OF 2,520 KILOS OF RAW OPIUM CACHED ON AN ISLAND OFF CHUMPHON PROVINCE. SINCE JANUARY 1, 1973 THE RTG HAS COMPLIED AN IMPRESSIVE RECORD IN ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS WHICH HAVE RANGED FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND TO THE NORTHERN PROVINCES AND THAT HAVE NETTED NEARLY 18 TONS OF NARCOTICS.

C. AID CUT OFF: THE CODEL WOLFF PRESS CONFERENCE SUGGESTS THAT FOREIGN AID TO NON-COOPERATING NATIONS SHOULD BE TERMIMNATED. THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO POINT OUT THAT PRESENT THAI SUCCESSES ARE IN PART THE RESULT OF RESOURCES THAT WE HAVE PROVIDED THEM. CUTTING OFF THESE RESOURCES CERTAINLY IS NOT THE WAY TO HELP COUNTRIES CONTROL NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING.

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D. CROP SUBSTITUTION: WHEN IAN WILLIAMS, THAILAND PROJECT MANAGER OF THE UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL (UNFDAC), BRIEFED CODEL WOLFF IN CHIANG MAI ON THE UN CROP SUBSTITUTION EFFORT, HE STATED THAT THE UN COULD PURCHASE ALL SUBSTITUTE CROPS TO BE GROWN BY THAI HILLTRIBE VILLAGES THIS YEAR FOR \$100,000. HE ESTIMATED THAT THE NET COST WOULD BE ONLY \$18,000 SINCE THE CROPS COULD BE RESOLD AT A PRICE SLIGHTLY LOWER

THAN THEIR PURCHASE PRICE (PARAGRAPH 7, REF B). FYI:
SINCE THAT TIME UNFDAC HEADQUARTERS IN GENEVA HAS
PROMISED WILLIAMS \$20,000 TO SUBSIDIZE THE PURCHASE
OF SUBSTITUTE CROPS FROM THE 30 VILLAGES UNDER UN CON-
TROL. THE UN FUNDS WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO SUPPORT THE
PURCHASE OF CROPS GROWN BY THE UN VILLAGES, BUT MAY NOT
BE USED TO PURCHASE SUBSTITUTUE CROPS GROWN BY OTHER
THAI HILLTRIBE VILLAGES, SUCH AS THOSE UNDER THE KING'S
HILLTRIBE PROJECT. MARKETING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CROPS
GROWN BY THE LATTER VILLAGES HAVE YET TO BE WORKED OUT
(REF F). END FYI. CODEL WOLFF STATES THAT ONLY \$18,000
IS NECESSARY TO REPLACE OPIUM WORTH MORE THAN \$25 MILLION
AT STREET LEVEL PRICES IN NEW YORK AND UNTOLD MILLIONS
IN STREET CRIME. THE CODEL APPARENTLY TOOK WILLAIMS
STATEMENT THAT CROP SUBSTITUTION CONTEMPLATED THIS YEAR
WOULD REMOVE ABOUT TEN PERCENT OF THAILAND'S EXPECTED
OPIUM PRODUCTION, OR ABOUT 16 TONS OF OPIUM, FROM PRO-
DUCTION AND CALCULATED THE STREET VALUE IN NEW YORK OF
THIS AMOUNT OF OPIUM. THIS IS A LEAP IN LOGIC SINCE,
AS STATED ABOVE, VERY LITTLE OF THE OPIUM GROWN IN
THAILAND EVER REACHES THE US.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BANGKO14197
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730944/aaaabgae.tel
Line Count: 137
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. STATE 179007; B. BANGKOK 13117; C. . BANGKOK 12877;
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31-Jul-2001 by kellew0>; APPROVED <14-Aug-2001 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: OREP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005